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Recommended Citation

"CAMPUS REPORT ONLY" (2007). *News Releases*. 2161.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/2161

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CAMPUS REPORT ONLY

04.11.2007 | Campus and Community PLANNERS SEEK INPUT.

As Burt Hill's planners develop preliminary concepts for the University of Dayton's new master plan, they will be guided by months of interviews, focus groups and surveys.

"The background work is substantially complete," said Jeff Funovits, project manager. "We've conducted a dozen focus groups and completed 60 UD interviews and 30 community interviews. We've analyzed parking data, conducted a food service survey, nearly finished a market research study and developed a set of guiding principles."

You'd expect Funovits to be drowning in data, but he's still open to more input. The campus community can review the schedule, progress and guiding principles and offer ideas through a special Web site: <http://www.udayton.edu/masterplan/> (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/masterplan/>).

"We're now in the phase of taking all that we've learned and benchmarking it against UD's strategic plan. From that, we'll make recommendations," he said.

Some of the planning assumptions that will shape the master plan include:

- * Undergraduate enrollment will hold steady; graduate and continuing education enrollment will experience moderate growth.
- * The integration of living and learning is central to a Marianist education.
- * Visual and academic image are important.
- * As Campus West develops, pedestrian links to the student neighborhoods will be developed.
- * Part of the newly acquired land will be set aside for future growth. Another portion will be reserved for market-based, mixed-use development that would provide a return on the land purchase investment and assist in the economic growth of Dayton.
- * Parking will continue to be located on the campus fringe.

Preliminary parking data gathered by Walker Parking Consultants is currently being analyzed for quantity and appropriate locations. The study will also review the potential need for alternate transportation and parking systems.

Preliminary results from a dining survey by Envision Strategies indicate that most on campus prefer a food court, but faculty, staff and graduate students also would like casual dining options.

"Most people want to eat in the center of campus," said Rob White, president of Envision Strategies, a foodservice consultant. "KU is still seen as the place to meet, greet and gather, but students also like the Emporium. It's hip, new, convenient to the book store. A food venue doesn't necessarily have to be big to be popular."

Within the next five years, spending on meals away from home is projected to grow 14 percent on campus and in a 10-mile radius, according to preliminary results from a market research study by Tripp Umbach.

"The area immediately adjacent campus will not experience population growth, but in surveys and focus groups people indicated the need for a convenience store/pharmacy/grocery and a marketplace style eatery with one or two national brands," said Ken Schott, senior project director with the research and economic impact analysis firm.

The master plan, when finished, will look at five-, 10-year and long-term land use. Burt Hill will share design principles and concepts with the board of trustees in May, followed by an additional meeting during the summer devoted to reviewing options. The Educational Leadership Council will devote a summer retreat to reviewing options. Faculty, staff and students will be invited to share their views in open forums in the fall. Trustees are expected to approve a final plan in October.

"The community — both within the University and outside — is excited about the development of this plan," said Richard

Perales, University campus planning director. "After a summer of finalizing details, it'll be a pleasure to roll out the preliminary report and gauge the reaction."